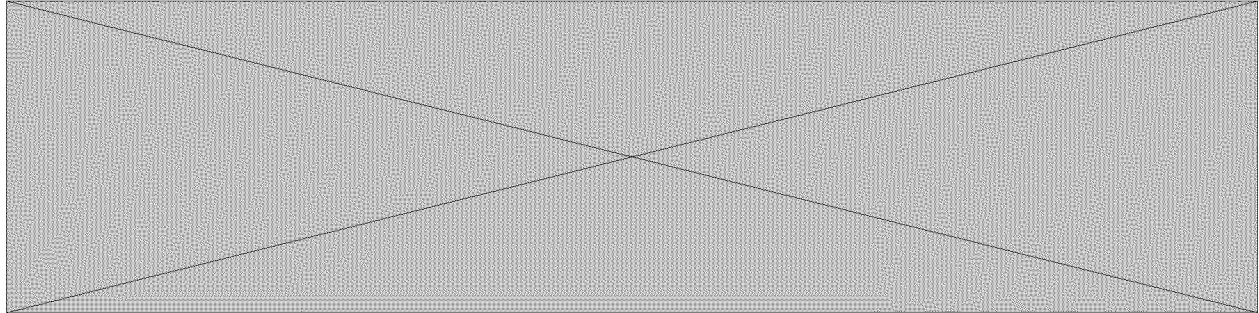
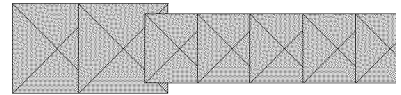


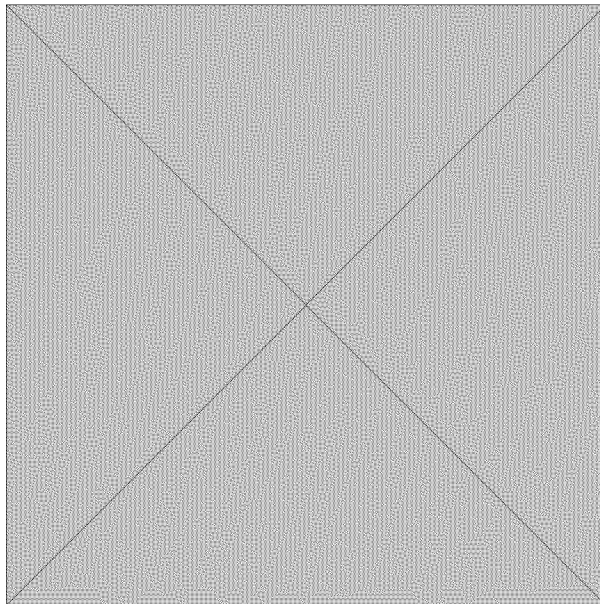
**To:** Smith, DavidW[Smith.DavidW@epa.gov]  
**From:** bioactivist=biologicaldiversity.org@mail.salsalabs.net  
**Sent:** Thur 1/1/2015 4:01:46 PM  
**Subject:** Endangered Earth: A Historic Year



**No. 755, Jan. 1, 2015**



## **A Year of Epic Gains for Endangered Species**

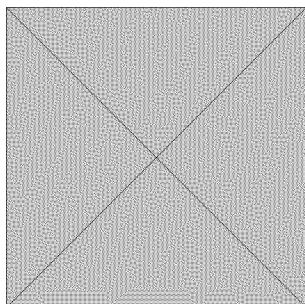


2014 brought phenomenal new safeguards to rare and vanishing animals and plants, including 300,000 square miles of protected habitat for loggerhead sea turtles and a proposal to protect 226 million acres of habitat for ringed seals in the Far North -- a proposal that, if finalized next year, will be the biggest critical habitat decision in history. The Center for Biological Diversity's work to save wildlife from coast to coast also resulted in new protection for more than 30 species -- including the yellow-billed cuckoo and Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog -- and a pitched fight to save wolves across the country.

Your faith in us helped inspire the work we did this year, and your financial support gave us the tools -- so please consider [making a gift](#) today to ensure we can keep up the pace of victories in 2015.

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### **Historic Species Protections**



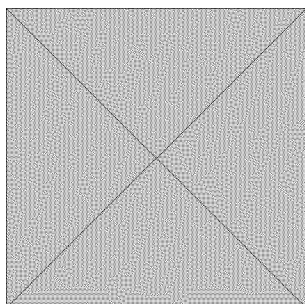
The Center played a key role in restoring wolf protections in Wyoming this year, ending a planned hunt and stopping uncontrolled wolf killing across 84 percent of the state; we also secured state protection for wolves in California, ensuring that animals recolonizing this vast state in the wake of path-breaker wolf OR-7 will be safe if federal protections are stripped away.

We won Endangered Species Act protection for eight amphibians and reptiles -- including Georgetown salamanders, Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs and Yosemite toads -- along with 25 freshwater species, 12 plants, five mammals, three fish, three butterflies and two birds. Sixteen years after we first petitioned for them, western yellow-billed cuckoos were finally protected under the Act, with proposed protection for more than half a million acres of critical habitat.

We halted plans to expand a facility in Albany, N.Y., to ship tar sands by train and barge along the Hudson River, threatening both wildlife and people, and helped defeat an Oregon terminal that would have shipped millions of tons of coal to Asia. We also filed a sweeping petition to reintroduce grizzly bears across the western United States.

Learn about our [Endangered Species program](#) and [Wild Success campaign](#).

### **Preserving Habitat**



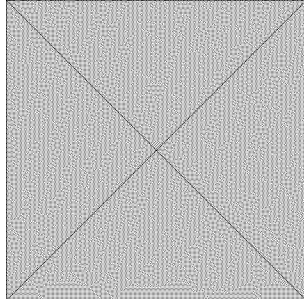
After more than five years of bureaucratic delay, in 2014 the Center won federal protection of critical habitat for threatened loggerhead sea turtles -- no fewer than 685 miles of East Coast beaches and more than 300,000 square miles of ocean. Following a 2013 lawsuit, the federal government designated important nesting beaches and waters off several states as protected areas essential for loggerhead recovery in the largest final designation of "critical habitat" yet seen.

We won final protection this year of 764,207 acres of critical habitat for jaguars in the Southwest, including an area where the disastrous Rosemont copper mine is proposed; successfully defended critical habitat for the dusky gopher frog against a timber-company challenge; and brought about the closure of 146 miles of off-road vehicle trails in Big Cypress National Preserve, protecting important habitat for Florida panthers and other species.

And a Center petition won the biggest proposed critical habitat preserve in history for ringed seals in the Beaufort, Bering and Chukchi seas: 226 million acres.

Check out our [Maps page](#), featuring many maps of [protected habitat and threats](#).

### **Curbing the Climate Crisis**

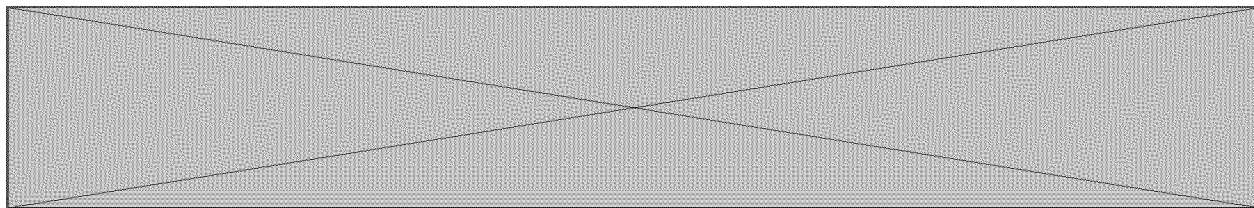


Many years of Center advocacy culminated this year in the Environmental Protection Agency issuing its first-ever proposal to limit greenhouse gas pollution from power plants using the Clean Air Act. We successfully pushed the EPA to finally begin the process for regulating airplanes' massive greenhouse pollution as well, which is currently projected to triple by mid-century without action.

We also played a leadership role in mobilizing some of the largest climate and fossil fuel protests in history, including a turnout of more than 400,000 at the People's Climate March in New York City (and some 200 people who rode our People's Climate Train across the country) and more than 3,000 at a California anti-fracking rally in Sacramento. We supported grassroots activists in passing California's first successful local ballot measure banning fracking and other dangerous oil development, with more such measures on the way.

We stopped approval of a massive new oil field on California's Central Coast through a court victory, while maintaining a moratorium on all oil and gas leasing on federal land in California because of another legal success last year.

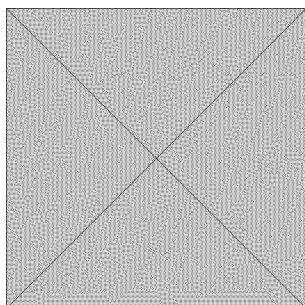
Learn about the Center's [Climate Law Institute](#).



### **Saving Sea Life**

### **Protecting Public Lands**

### **Expanding Innovative Work on Population, Sustainability**

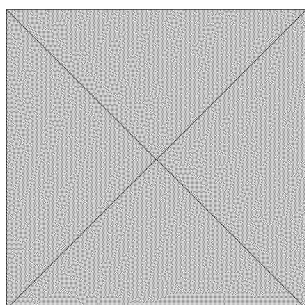


Our oceans work saw big returns and groundbreaking new campaigns this year. We won federal protection for 20 coral species threatened by ocean warming and acidification, along with release of a recovery plan for elkhorn and staghorn corals that includes actions to reduce global warming.

We settled a case that will result in larger habitat protections along the eastern seaboard for critically endangered North Atlantic right whales, and we also petitioned for expanded critical habitat in the Pacific Northwest for killer whales. We initiated a bold campaign that resulted in the EPA advancing a Hawaiian island as a potential Superfund site for federal cleanup due to the hazard that plastic pollution there poses to native wildlife; we petitioned for the agency to regulate PVC plastic from cradle to grave. And we won a seasonal closure of California's drift gillnet fishery to protect loggerhead sea turtles from entanglement -- as well as emergency regulations to protect sperm whales from the same fate.

On offshore fracking, we exposed this dangerous practice along the California coast and filed a legal petition with the EPA to ban the discharge of toxic fracking chemicals into the ocean.

Learn more about our [Oceans program](#).

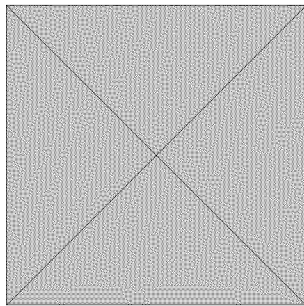


Our Public Lands program successfully defended Grand Canyon National Park from efforts by the uranium industry to squelch the 20-year ban on new toxic mining in its watershed; we also averted mining exploration on the boundary of Death Valley National Park. In our fight for the San Pedro River we won a major, precedent-setting legal victory in a years-long effort to force water law to acknowledge that groundwater and surface water are connected. And our successful, decade-long campaign to improve large-scale solar development policy was boosted by stopping a disastrously planned mega-development next to Joshua Tree National Park and in a key thread of the Pacific Flyway. The BLM needs to limit industrial solar projects on readily available degraded lands near transmission lines rather than essential wildlife and recreation areas.

On national forests, we defended the Santa Fe National Forest travel-management plan that established habitat protection for Jemez Mountain salamanders, closed 3,000-plus miles to ORVs and made more than 440,000 acres off-limits to motorized cross-country use. We won a challenge to livestock grazing on 155,000 acres in the Tonto National Forest needed as core habitat for Sonoran desert tortoises.

We also achieved first-time recognition by the Forest Service of the importance of post-fire landscapes in the Sierras as distinct habitat types that are in need of conservation, *not* salvage logging.

Learn more about our work on [public lands](#).



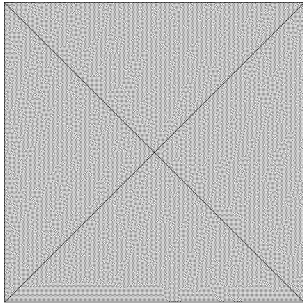
This year our Population and Sustainability program launched Take Extinction Off Your Plate, the first full-time program by a major environmental group addressing the devastating impact of the meat industry on wildlife -- a campaign that has garnered extensive media coverage. We reached nearly 2 million people on social media with the message to reduce meat consumption to protect wildlife as part of our "Extinction-free BBQ" initiative for Labor Day.

We also created #CrowdedPlanet, an innovative social media campaign that inspired people from around the world to share photos of what living in a world of 7 billion looked and felt like to them. The campaign continues to gain popularity.

We mobilized supporters to submit more than 1,500 letters to the editor to newspapers around the country for World Population Day about the effects of population growth on wildlife, and we talked about human population and family planning with thousands of students on dozens of college campuses through our Endangered Species Condom distributions, classroom presentations and conferences. And our population staff appeared as featured experts on radio shows and podcasts across the country talking about runaway human population, overconsumption and the environment.

Check out our [Population and Sustainability program](#) and [Take Extinction Off Your Plate](#).

**Fighting for Urban Wildlands**



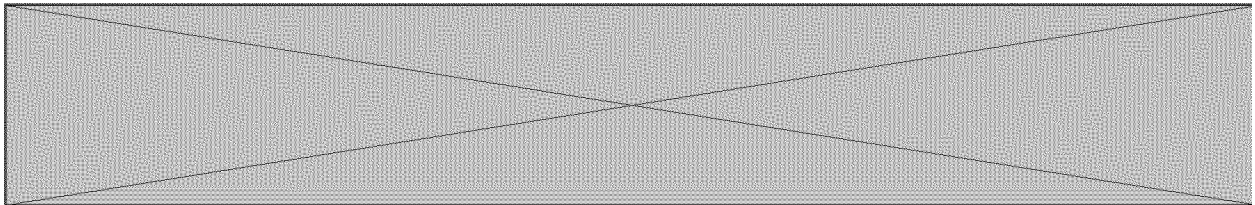
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Our Urban Wildlands program -- which fights to save important unprotected lands and waters from bad planning and urban sprawl -- fought the massive Newhall Ranch project all the way to the California Supreme Court this year, where we now have a chance to curb destructive development projects throughout the state in addition to protecting the Santa Ana River's steelhead, unarmored threespine stickleback, San Fernando spineflower and least Bell's vireo.

We defeated a controversial power-line project proposed in Southern California that would have cut through habitat for endangered species and a rural greenbelt; scored a victory over the expansion of a landfill in San Diego County, where we also defeated the proposed Quail Brush power plant; halted construction on a highway adjacent to the wild and scenic Smith River in Northern California to save coho salmon; and filed a legal challenge to protect San Diego's largest remaining burrowing owl colony.

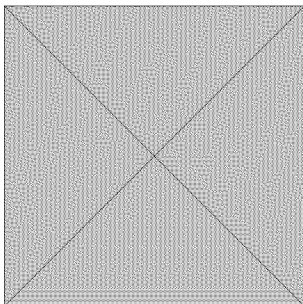
We also won a major court victory in California's water wars, securing full environmental review of the controversial Kern Water Bank.

Learn more about our [Urban Wildlands](#) program.



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## Alaska and the Arctic



We won a year-long ban on the hunting of Kenai Peninsula brown

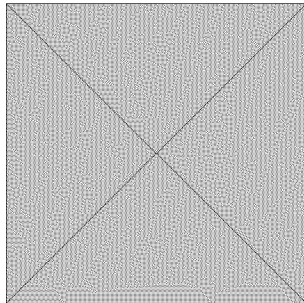
bears in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge; won a 9th Circuit lawsuit challenging the Chukchi Sea oil and gas leases on which Shell's dirty Arctic drilling plan is based and prevailed over Shell in its lawsuit against the Center and other environmental groups in the 9th Circuit.

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We secured a 2015 deadline for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to make a protection decision on Alexander Archipelago wolves, in trouble because of old-growth logging in the Tongass National Forest, and filed a lawsuit challenging the largest timber sale on the Tongass in 20 years. We petitioned the federal government to protect yellow cedars, which are disappearing as a result of climate change and unsustainable logging there as well.

Read more about the [Arctic meltdown](#) and [Arctic oil development](#).

### **International Conservation**



The Center worked to stop the swift slide into extinction of the vaquita, a highly endangered small porpoise in the Gulf of California with fewer than 100 individuals remaining -- which is predicted to be extinct by 2018 if it continues to be caught in fishing nets. We sought trade sanctions against Mexico this year to prevent the country's illegal fishery of totoaba, a rare fish, from driving both vaquita and totoaba into oblivion.

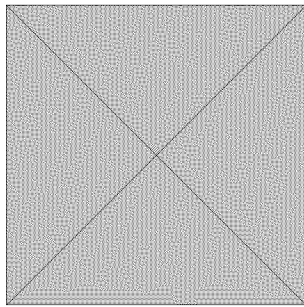
Each year more than 650,000 dolphins, whales, vaquitas and other marine mammals die in foreign fishing nets, yet billions of pounds of foreign seafood ends up on U.S. consumers' plates. We filed a lawsuit to ensure that all fishes imported into the United States meet the same marine-mammal protection standards that apply to U.S. fishermen -- to level the playing field and save thousands of marine mammals across the globe.

We also filed suit to halt construction of a U.S. military base in Japan that would destroy the habitat of endangered Okinawa dugongs, which are similar to manatees. The Okinawa dugong is an ancient cultural icon for the Okinawan people, but fewer than 50 of the animals remain. The U.S. base is opposed by Okinawan locals and conservationists alike.

Read more about saving [vaquitas](#) and [Okinawa dugongs](#).

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## Tackling Toxics

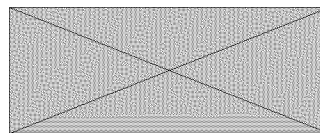
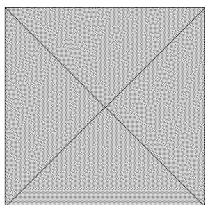


The Center's toxics work saw an important victory this year when, after we and our allies petitioned, the Fish and Wildlife Service banned bee-killing pesticides and genetically engineered crops from the entire 150-million-acre national wildlife refuge system. Also at the national level, we helped achieve a ban on residential sales of super-toxic rodenticides across the country and forced the Service to analyze the impacts of five particularly dangerous pesticides that are harming endangered species.

We filed a formal petition with the state of New York to ban *all* extremely toxic rodenticides; continued our legal advocacy to reform the way the federal government reviews pesticides' impacts on endangered species generally; and continued to push for an ongoing statewide moratorium on suction-dredge mining in California.

On air toxics, we sued to limit airborne lead and prevailed in court to reduce airborne soot pollution. And finally, we generated enough public pressure to nix approval of 97 percent of arsenic compounds in animal feed -- chemicals that harm all of us.

Learn more about our work to [defend endangered species from toxics](#).



Kierán Suckling

@KieranSuckling

Executive Director

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